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# O'Dwyer's

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## WTC HEALTH PROGRAM NEEDS PR FIRM

The World Trade Center Health Program, which was established after the 9/11 terror attacks, has issued an RFP for outreach and education services aimed at underrepresented populations of survivors and responders who may not be aware of the benefits they are entitled to.



The James Zadroga 9/11 Health and Compensation Act of 2010 established the WTCHP to provide monitoring and treatment benefits for emergency responders, recovery and cleanup workers of the attacks in New York City, at the Pentagon, and in Shanksville, PA.

An estimated 400K people in NYC were impacted by the dust cloud caused by the collapse of the WTC towers and burning of adjacent buildings, and the ensuing smoke cloud that spread toxic compounds throughout the surrounding area.

Only about a quarter of them have enrolled in the program.

Individuals must meet specific eligibility requirements to participate in the WTCHP program.

The WTCHP is looking for outreach targeted at underrepresented survivors including Spanish- and Chinese-speakers, Lower Manhattan residents and people who were less than 21 years old on 9/11.

Proposals are due April 4. WTCHP is administered by the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health, which is part of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

[Read the RFP.](#)

## SITRICK'S BECKER MOVES TO FTI CONSULTING

Tom Becker, head of the New York office of crisis shop [Sitrick And Company](#), has joined [FTI Consulting](#)'s strategic communications practice.



**Tom Becker**

During his 15-year run at Sitrick, Becker handled situations including litigation, Chapter 11 restructurings, transactions, reputation management and criminal investigations.

Earlier, he reported for Bloomberg News and Dow Jones on corporate litigation, restructurings and white-collar crime. He

also worked for the *Los Angeles Times*.

Becker takes on the senior managing director slot in FTI's crisis & litigation practice and is based in New York.

## EDELMAN REPS CANADA'S CDPQ IN THE US

[Edelman](#) has a six-month \$250K agreement to bolster the US visibility of Caisse de dépôt et placement du Québec, the Montreal investment firm that has \$330B in assets under management.

The firm is to help CDPQ stand out in the crowded US market, amplify the ways it is advancing meaningful, sustainable investment and leverage its thought leadership at industry events, according to its contract.



CDPQ announced a new climate strategy in 2021 that features an exit from investments in oil production by the end of this year and achieving a 60 percent cut in the carbon intensity of its portfolio is a key area of focus.

The Montreal-based firm, which manages the Government of Quebec's pension fund, also wants to promote its \$45B technology platform.

Edelman's staff will get involved in the media training of select spokespeople from CDPQ.

Edelman's CDPQ team includes Renee Calabro (US lead, private equity & NY lead, capital markets), Ira Gorsky (executive VP) and Jadis Armbruster (senior account supervisor).

CDPQ acquired an investment stake in [ICR Inc., a financial/strategic communications shop](#), last September.

## MERCURY PROMOTES UKRAINIAN NGO

Mercury Public Affairs is conducting US outreach for GloBee International for Regional Development about the plight of the eastern Ukrainian city of Kharkiv.

Ukraine's second-largest city had a population of 1.5M prior to the Russian invasion. It has suffered a constant barrage of Russian shelling and missile assaults that has killed at least 500 civilians.

GloBee is a non-profit group of businesspeople, lobbyists, PA professionals and American/European expats living in Ukraine.

It is currently pushing for the US and NATO countries to "close the skies over Ukraine," a point president Zelensky stressed during his March 16 presentation to the US Congress.

Mercury is working for GloBee on a pro-bono basis. Managing director Jake Dilemani is a director of GloBee.

The Omnicom unit on February 24 terminated relations with Russia's En+Group and Sovocombank.



**Jake Dilemani**

## JOURNOS SAY PR CREDIBILITY DROPS

The number of journalists who see CEOs and company PR professionals as credible sources has dropped in the past year, according to a new survey from Muck Rack.



Both groups remain near the top of the list, but respondents to the “[The State of Journalism 2022](#)” gave them both lower marks than in the

2021 edition of the survey. While 84 percent of respondents said that CEOs were credible sources for their reporting last year, that number slid to 66 percent this year.

Company PR pros also saw a decline from 55 percent last year to 50 percent in the latest survey.

The most trusted source was “academic subject matter experts,” deemed credible by 84 percent of respondents.

Although social media personalities and celebrity spokespeople still lag behind more established sources, they are inching their way up. The trust level for social media personalities rose from 12 percent to 17 percent, and celebrity spokespeople are up to 14 percent from 12 percent.

When it comes to social networks, Twitter is the preferred platform by a long shot, with 77 percent saying that it is a valuable source in their work. Facebook ranks a distant second (39 percent), followed by LinkedIn (24 percent), Instagram (18 percent) and YouTube (16 percent).

Companies also seem to be getting up to speed with the methods they use to disseminate information. While 61 percent of respondents in 2021’s survey said that the way companies share information is outdated, that figure dropped to 44 percent this year.

The Muck Rack study also looked at how journalists respond to pitches. Almost a quarter (23 percent) of respondents said they were more likely to respond to pitches than they were last year, with 18 percent saying they were less likely.

Pitches remain a major source for stories, with 80 percent of respondents saying that at least a quarter of their stories originate from pitches.

A big factor in making a pitch attractive, according to the survey respondents, is keeping it short. About seven in ten (68 percent) said they prefer pitches of 200 words or less.

## EXXONMOBIL HIRES BESTBUY CCO FURMAN

ExxonMobil has hired Matt Furman as VP-public and government affairs, effective April 1. He will replace Suzanne McCarron, who is retiring after a 24-year run.



**Matt Furman**

Furman joins the energy giant from BestBuy, where he had been chief communications and public affairs officer since 2012.

He was in charge of internal/external PR, government affairs, corporate social responsibility, sustainability and charitable giving.

Previously, Furman was VP-corporate affairs at Mars Chocolate, head of corporate communications

at Google and senior VP-corporate communications at CNN.

He also served as director of communications for the Federal Emergency Management Agency and the New York City Mayor’s Office of Emergency Management.

## NEWS OF FIRMS

London-based **Gravity Global** expands its operations in the US with the acquisition of **9th Wonder B2B** and **Morsecode**. The Gravity Global US business will be led by José Lozano, currently CEO of 9th Wonder. He will report to Gravity global group chief executive Mark Lethbridge. Morsecode CEO/chief creative officer Mark Morse will serve as a managing partner. The acquisition gives Gravity Global owned offices in Los Angeles, Minneapolis, Denver, Dallas and Houston.

**WPP** is forming a long-term consultative partnership with **Reddit**. Under the arrangement, WPP will get a first look at Reddit’s commerce solutions “so both companies can collaborate on joint products to take to shared clients.” In addition, the partners will collaborate on client campaigns, focusing primarily on lower-funnel education, strategy and tactics. The partnership builds on Reddit’s existing relationship with GroupM, WPP’s media division. WPP was also part of Reddit’s Product Council, which launched last year.



**Sunshine Sachs** is rebranding as Sunshine Sachs Morgan & Lylis, reflecting the promotion of current partners Keleigh Thomas Morgan and Heather Lylis to co-presidents of the firm. Founder Ken Sunshine and CEO Shawn Sachs said in a note that Morgan and Lylis “have helped to grow the agency from a small boutique PR firm of less than 10 people to a full-service consultancy with more than 250 employees and offices in New York City, Los Angeles, Washington, DC, Atlanta, Austin and San Francisco.” The shop’s business has expanded into integrated campaigns, media relations, talent integration, creative, sponsorship and events.

**Bliss Holding Group** is moving into a 26,000-square-foot space in the Helmsley Building, a 34-story building in midtown Manhattan. Bliss, which has signed a 10-year lease on the space, is scheduled to move from its current offices at 500 Park Avenue this summer. Purchased by real estate owner, manager, and developer RXR in 2017, the building has since undergone extensive renovation. “Their presence will be a great addition to the wide range of firms who occupy this iconic building,” said William Elder, EVP and Managing Director of New York City Leasing at RXR.



**PhillComm Global** is launched by former CMW Media chief growth officer and RLM Public Relations COO Jon Lindsay Phillips. The integrated communications firm will work primarily with B2B companies in such sectors as web3, fintech, traditional financial services, payments, AI/voice, new media, sustainability/green energy, trust/privacy, SaaS, adtech, edtech, cannabis/hemp and medtech. PhillComm, will have offices in New York City and Savannah, GA.

**Concepts Communications** makes a commitment to spread awareness about the importance of including disability in workplace diversity, equity and inclusion plans throughout the month of March. The agency will be posting information about disability inclusion on Twitter, Facebook and LinkedIn. It is also encouraging other employers to follow suit in spreading the “Disability is Diversity” message. “We will continue to advocate for the inclusion of people with disabilities in DEI efforts,” said company President Karen Herson.

## **REBUILDING TRUST THROUGH FOOD**

It's never been a more exciting, opportune or challenging time to be in the food and beverage business. As we look across the landscape of issues facing individuals, communities and society at large, food is a constant. In some cases, it's the root of the problem, and almost always a necessary part of the solution.



**Heidi Hovland**

Edelman's newly released 2022 Trust Barometer data for the food and beverage sector shows that trust is highest among businesses and non-governmental organizations and continues to remain low for societal leaders, government

and media. And while there's a high level of trust in employers and businesses overall, there's considerable drop-off when we get to the food and beverage products we make, how we make them and how they get to our table.

Without a doubt, there's work to be done. Overall trust in the food and beverage sector remains below pre-pandemic highs, with three of the world's largest food exporters—U.S., Germany and France—scoring among the lowest on trust, and the U.S. down six points since last year. We're seeing particular skepticism regarding new forms of tech in the food system, underpinned by macro fears around privacy and safety.

The lack of trust in government runs deep. Not only do consumers not trust the government's ability to solve societal problems, the government is also seen as a dividing force in society (48 percent). Not far behind is media, which is also seen as a dividing force (46 percent). Since 2012, trust is down across traditional media, social media and search engines.

On the flip side, consumers are looking to businesses and NGOs to act as competent and effective drivers of positive change. "Local" has been a virtue/quality signifier in food and beverage for decades. We see a similar correlation between familiarity and trust in individuals and leaders. While trust in CEOs overall is up slightly, trust in "my CEO" rose three points, to 66 percent. Even higher was trust in "my co-workers," at 74 percent, only slightly behind scientists at 75 percent.

Our research shows an expectation for businesses to play a broader societal role and for CEOs to personally lead from the front on change. More than eight in ten believe CEOs should be personally visible when discussing public policy with external stakeholders or work their company has done to benefit society. And six in 10 employees expect their company's CEO to speak publicly about highly topical and sometimes controversial issues they care about.

Food makers and their leadership are well-positioned to allay the fears of their employees and consumers. We see dozens of examples, from *Fortune* 500 companies to start-ups, making it their business to improve equity, access and the health of people and the planet. As companies and their leaders pursue operational changes to improve sustainability, drive technology innovation to improve nutrition, access and mitigate environmental impact, and move from commitments to real change on the issues that truly matter, we're confident that trust is within reach.

*Heidi Hovland is Global Food & Beverage Chair at [Edelman](#).*

## **'CONTENT' MAY BE WEARING OUT ITS WELCOME**

As we barge into 2022, the list of words that are overused, especially in public relations, grows longer by the day. Curated. Bespoke. Reimagined. Zoom as a verb. But none gets under my skin more than the ubiquitous buzzword "content."

I evidently grew up under a misapprehension about what the word "content" meant. I believed "content" to be more or less whatever came in a package, the stuff inside. Most dictionaries define the noun "content" as "something contained."

But no longer does traditional usage suffice. Nowadays, "content" is a catch-all term, deployed at will to mean literally almost anything – and, as such, also nothing – provided it contains something. Music. Podcasts, TV streaming services. University curricula. Museum exhibitions. Its influence has infiltrated our cultural bloodstream as a toxin.

Content, we're often reminded, is king. Content agencies churn out branded and sponsored content. Operations called content farms have sprung into being. LinkedIn is overrun with specialists in content marketing and content management who aggregate – and curate – the ever-cascading content.

Let me clarify here. I'm most offended seeing the word "content" increasingly used as a label for what I've always regarded simply as writing. Yet some writers, in an effort to stay current, now resort to calling themselves content strategists. No wonder: the Robert Half staffing company says such species are in high demand.

If you're a writer, please call yourself a writer, and your writing, writing. If you've produced a blog post, please feel compelled in the name of decency, not to mention authenticity, to call it a blog post.

I say substituting the word "content" for the written word devalues writing itself. All too often, "content" is a synonym for filler, stuff created mainly to take up space, fodder to plug up black holes in the universe.

I blame the Internet. Websites created a craving for so-called content. The culprits behind this misdeed are the programmers who applied the word "content" to everything marketed and merchandised and otherwise commodified online.

Most "content" is noise signifying little or nothing. But banning the noun "content" from further corruption is a lost cause. We should instead just minimize its use.

Some promising reforms may already be underway. PayPal recently announced eliminating the word "content" from its vocabulary. Even so, its replacement is "brand-currency."

Seriously?

Clearly, then, we all still have our work cut out for us. The overarching irony here is how much of the "content" cranked out day after day actually winds up being neither filler nor fodder but, in fact, empty. Let's get back to business. Let's stick with words that still carry that elusive quality known as meaning.

*Bob Brody, a corporate editorial consultant and personal essayist now living in Italy, is the author of "Playing Catch with Strangers: A Family Guy (Reluctantly) Comes of Age." He contributes to the New York Times, the Washington Post and the Wall Street Journal, among other publications.*



**Bob Brody**



## **CA SEEKS PR FOR YOUTH PROGRAM**

The California Health and Human Services Agency is looking for a firm to handle PR and communications for its Office of Youth and Community Restoration.



Established July 1, 2021, OYCR “underscores California’s commitment to viewing court-involved youth not as criminals but as children in need of rehabilitation and support as they move toward adulthood,” according to the RFP.

OYCR’s partner will “develop and execute a PR campaign which includes a compelling change story narrative for internal and external audiences to support its ongoing work.”

It will create content for Meta/Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Twitter, LinkedIn and actively seek earned media, employing techniques to acquire it.

It will submit a rebranding package, handle media relations, oversee events/workshops and prepare speeches/newsletters, talking points/presentations.

OYCR has a budget of up to \$800K for the work that will begin April 4 and run through June 30, 2023.

Responses are due March 25. They go to: [Faisal.Aziz@chhs.ca.gov](mailto:Faisal.Aziz@chhs.ca.gov).

[Read the RFP \(PDF\)](#).

## **CREDIT SUISSE DEPOSITS PR DUTIES IN COX**

Credit Suisse has named Rob Cox, global editor/co-founder of Reuters’ Breakingviews financial commentary site,



**Rob Cox**

group head of corporate communications. He will join the bank in Zurich on April 12.

He helped launch Breakingviews in London in 2000 and then guided its U.S. expansion in 2004, including the oversight of daily columns in the *Wall Street Journal* and *New York Times*.

Reuters acquired Breakingviews in 2009 and Cox became editor-in-chief in charge of about 40 columnists.

At Credit Suisse, Cox will take over from Christine Graeff, who was appointed global head of human resources in February 2022 and report to CEO Thomas Gottstein.

Dominik von Arx, who handled PR on an interim basis, will become deputy group head of corporate communications.

## **INFINITE GLOBAL GEARS FOR GROWTH**

[Infinite Global](#) has hired Kenneth Gary as its first chief growth officer. Gary was most recently at B2B cannabis company LeafLink, where he served as director of business development for national strategic accounts.



**Kenneth Gary**

He was previously a partner at a legal business consultancy Bar-etz+Brunell and has worked as a journalist and editor at Thomson Reuters as well as publisher of the *National Law Journal*.

At Infinite Global, Gary will focus on enhancing and diversifying the agency’s service lines and identifying areas for new business development in the US and UK.

## **GLOBALISM IS DEAD—THANKS TO PUTIN**

One of the many consequences of Vladimir Putin’s attack on Ukraine is a poisonous effect on business and financial relationships.

Scores of businesses have suspended or pulled out of Russia, Russian products have been banned, and access to capital has been cut off. Putin has threatened to arrest U.S. executives who “defy” the government, while distrust and ill will are spreading everywhere.

These developments have communications implications for everything from investor relations, to ESG stakeholders, to marketing communications and employee communications.

Corporations worldwide will have to re-calibrate their risk profiles, and many will not take the chance of doing business with Russia in particular or totalitarian regimes in general.

That is what is making Chinese president XI Jinping as nervous as a cat in a room full of rocking chairs. Even as I write this, a Wall Street analyst firm has slammed China internet stocks as “uninvestable” for the next six to twelve months, largely because of a Chinese government clamp-down on their operations.

Another analyst declared on CNBC that “deglobalization is the best bet for the next five to ten years.” Add Putin’s aggression to the disruption already caused by Covid, and you have a world in enormous turmoil and transition.

If you are a communicator in a multinational corporation, or even a domestic corporation with international manufacturing and sourcing, take a hard look at everything you are doing and develop new communication strategies to address change, disruption, and emerging issues.

Remember the old adage that “everything communicates.” If your company is offshoring in, or sourcing from a country with an authoritarian regime, try to influence at least a review of current policies and practices (Are you listening, Apple?). Leave no stone unturned, because the one you overlook may be the one that rises up and smacks you in the face.

The next few years are not likely to be easy, as repercussions of Putin’s reckless invasion reverberate around the world. As usual, the game will be won by those who are prepared and proactive about communications.

*Bill Huey is president of Strategic Communications and the author of Carbon Man (Kindle, 2010).*



**Bill Huey**

## **WELLSTAR’S NICOLAS OPTS FOR SPI GROUP**

Trish Nicolas, who was executive director of PR at Georgia’s Wellstar Health System, has joined [Ruder Finn](#)’s SPI Group strategic communications/digital solutions shop as executive VP, communications strategy and editorial.

Based in Atlanta, she will counsel clients on brand reputation, issues management, story development and audience engagement.

Nicolas, who ran her own consulting firm, also did stints at Jackson Spalding and Ogilvy. She has worked with clients such as Delta, Home Depot, Nortel and Coca-Cola.

At SPI, she will report to James Koppenal, managing director.



**Trish Nicolas**

## HEMPSTEAD, NY NEEDS BRANDING SERVICES

The Town of Hempstead, New York, is seeking proposals from firms that can develop and execute a marketing strategy.



The Nassau County town is looking for an agency to develop a cohesive marketing strategy and plan to promote the recent rebranding of one of its hamlets, Baldwin.

Scope of the work includes developing a branding and marketing campaign; devising logo designs and slogans for public consideration; fabricating and installing signage; launching a downtown website/app; creating ads/images and videos to be used across platforms; and conducting stakeholder interviews, focus groups, logo/tagline testing and community surveys.

Proposals are due by 4:00 p.m. on Friday, March 25 and should be mailed or delivered to: Town of Hempstead; Attention: John E. Rottkamp, Commissioner; 200 North Franklin Street; Hempstead, NY 11550. All bidding agencies should submit five copies of their proposals.

Questions should be directed to Matthew Hirsch at 516/538-7100.

[Download the RFP \(PDF\).](#)

## CON ED ALUM CLENDENIN JOINS BUTLER

Michael Clendenin, who served as director of media relations in a 20-year stint at Consolidated Edison, has joined [Butler Associates Strategic Communications](#).



**Michael Clendenin**

He will handle energy, infrastructure, environmental and real estate clients of the Manhattan-based shop.

Clendenin worked in journalism at WEEL-AM and the Associated Press before moving into PR.

He joined Con Ed in 2000 from NYC's City Council, where he served as director of communications.

Tom Butler called Clendenin "a consummate professional, highly respected by the New York press corps and C-suite leaders." Most recently, he was running Clendenin Connections.

## M BOOTH TAPS DXTRA'S MATHESON GAY

[M Booth Health](#) has named Peter Matheson Gay, who was chief creative officer at DXTRA's Health Integrated Solutions, its chief impact officer.



**Peter Matheson Gay**

Prior to taking the spot at Interpublic's collective of 27 PR and specialist firms, Matheson Gay did a more than a decade run at [Weber Shandwick](#), IPG PR flagship.

He joined Weber Shandwick from Cohn & Wolfe, where he was senior VP-healthcare.

"Peter is an incredibly unique combination of a progressive, boundary-breaking creative, a skilled client counselor and most importantly, a healthcare strategist with a deep expertise," said Stacey Bernstein, M Booth Health CEO.

She succeeded Tim Bird as CEO in January.

Bernstein joined M Booth Health from Weber Shandwick, where she was GM of Boston & executive VP/global director of digital health.

## BERLINROSEN TOPS OBSERVER'S POWER LIST

[BerlinRosen](#) has topped the [2022 Observer's Best PR Firms in America](#) list that was published March 15, making it the first firm to enjoy a repeat performance.

Valerie Berlin's and Jonathan Rosen's firm was No. 1 on the 2018 list.

BerlinRosen made the grade on this year's roster due to a 25 percent revenue jump in 2021, "A-list" client growth (Bloomberg Intelligence, MeToo, Westfield, Macy's, Mozilla, One Vanderbilt) and its work on successful election campaigns of NYC comptroller Brad Lander and Philadelphia DA Larry Krasner.

42West, which handled the James Bond blockbuster "No Time to Die" and the coming out of the new bi-Superman on behalf of DC comics, took the No. 2 slot.

Alison Brod Marketing Communications ranked No. 3 as it followed up its Popeye's chicken-sandwich mania with Burger King's Moldy Whopper campaign.

SKDK weighed in at No. 4 on the strength of its push for Pfizer's COVID-19 vaccine rollout and representation of victims of alleged abuse by members of the Boy Scouts organization.

The Lede Company, [Finn Partners](#), [Prosek](#), Rogers & Cowan PMK, Nasty Little Man and ID round out the Top Ten.



## ACCOUNTS IN TRANSIT

[JeffreyGroup](#) lands the **Council of the Americas**, an organization that promotes free trade and open markets throughout the Americas. The agency will work with COA as it prepares for the 2022 COA Symposium & 27th BRAVO Business Awards, scheduled for October 28 in Miami. Jeffrey Group will be tasked with creating a communications strategy and action plan, developing content, conducting media outreach around 2022 milestones, and providing media support for COA and honorees at the events. "JeffreyGroup's pan-regional expertise and experience working with global brands provides a strategic intersection with COA's mission," said Americas Society/Council of the Americas vice president Maria Lourdes Teran.



[CIIC PR](#) adds **BGPL USA** to its roster of wine & spirits clients. The agency will lead strategic public relations efforts to generate brand awareness across BGPL USA's wine houses and brands (Barton & Guestier, Patriarche, Veuve du Vernay and Listel) in key markets. The program will consist of trade and consumer media relations, consumer activations, events and promotions, influencer partnerships and product sampling opportunities. BGPL USA offers a comprehensive portfolio of French wines for the US market. The company recently announced its name change from Surville Enterprises to reflect the evolution of the company and business in the USA.

**Puzzle Partner**, a B2B travel and hospitality technology marketing agency, is named agency of record for AI-powered rewards platform **Laasie**. The agency will lead branding, content, and public relations to reflect Laasie's mission to disrupt the guest loyalty space. Laasie says its platform motivates customer loyalty with personalized, instantly selectable rewards that help hospitality brands increase net revenue, drive member engagement, and build dynamic customer relationships.

# COMMENTARY



**Andrew Cuomo**

**Early April Fool's Day from CNBC...** Andrew Cuomo, the disgraced former governor of New York, is thinking about running for his old job, reported CNBC on March 16.

C'mon, CNBC. That's not funny.

Handy Andy, who resigned last year due to multiple allegations of sexual misconduct, is apparently buoyed by polls that found him in a tight race with his successor, Kathy Hochul, in a Democratic primary that is slated for June.

*The Hill* reported March 10 that Cuomo trails Hochul, his former lieutenant governor, by a 37 percent to 33 percent margin.

Cuomo certainly has the financial warchest needed to mount a run against Hochul.

His campaign has \$16M in the bank compared to \$20M for the current governor.

Cuomo has embarked on a reputational rehab tour, speaking at a Black church in Brooklyn and before the New York Hispanic Clergy Organization. He also has blanketed New York with television ads that tout his accomplishments in office.

The truth of the matter: New Yorkers were tired of their three-and-a-half term control-freak governor well before the allegations against him surfaced.

A primary contest against Hochul would turn out to be one of the nastiest campaigns of recent memory.

You can rest assured that Hochul would not have to twist many of the arms of the women who levied charges against Cuomo, to campaign for her.

Cuomo may run to gain a measure of revenge against Hochul, who called his alleged behavior "repulsive."

He probably feels that Hochul, who had zero visibility since becoming the Empire State's lieutenant governor in 2014, rose to national prominence only due to his resignation. "I made you," thinks Andy.

Cuomo told the Brooklyn congregation: "I am blessed, I have many options in life and I am open to all of them, but on the question if I am at peace, No I am not."

The people of the Empire State are at peace. We do not miss the political theater and backstabbing that characterized Cuomo's time in Albany. If he wants peace, Cuomo should book a pilgrimage to India to visit the Dalai Lama.

**Interpublic is suspending operations in Russia** and leaving enough capital to pay its 200 staffers their salaries for the next six months, according to a March 14 memo from CEO Philippe Krakowsky.

The IPG wind-down of operations is due to Russia's "unprovoked invasion of Ukraine."

Krakowsky had hoped for successful ceasefire talks, but "recent and escalating attacks on civilian targets, including hospitals, make it regrettably clear that the trajectory of the conflict is escalating."

He believes the tragic situation in Ukraine "will re-shape the international order globally, with lasting consequences for

Europe and have a ripple effect on political alignments all the way to Asia."

Publicis Groupe CEO Arthur Sadoun announced March 15 that ownership of its 1,200 strong Russian operation had been transferred to local management.

Publicis is in daily contact with its 350 employees in Ukraine and is doing everything to protect them. It is providing security alert systems, psychological and mental health support, help with visas, and guaranteeing salaries for everyone for the entire year.

Sadoun promised the French shop would continue to stand by the side of its Ukrainian team and "be exhaustive in the solutions we bring and immediate aid we provide."

**With God on their side, PR doesn't have a chance...** The British media are howling over the shocking firing of 800 P&O Ferries workers who were canned without notice on March 17.

Dubai's DP World, owner of P&O, claims the ships that connect Liverpool, Hull and Dover to France, Holland and Ireland lost \$132M during the past year, a deficit that is not sustainable.

The Archbishop of Canterbury Justin Welby and Bishop of Dover Rose Hudson-Wilkin have weighed in on the labor squabble. "Ill-treating workers is not just business. In God's eyes it is sin," they wrote in a joint letter.

They want the British government to intervene and "make urgent and forceful representations to the Government of Dubai, a historic and close ally of the UK."

Who speaks for P&O Ferries? Its website lists New Century Media as PR contact. David Burnside, PA director of British Airways from 1984 to 1993, chairs New Century Media.

He is a former member of parliament from Northern Ireland who claims to have played a key role in the process leading up to the Good Friday Agreement that ended the political violence in Northern Ireland.

He'll have to muster up his best negotiating skills to make peace with Welby and Hudson-Wilkin.

**In a desperate bid to stave off sanctions on Sovcombank,** former US Senator and Mercury Partner David Vitter said the Russian bank was staffed by executives who used to work for US companies, many of them women.

GE Money, MetLife and Liberty Mutual transferred clients and staffers to Sovcombank when they decided to exit Russia, according to a memo from Vitter.

Those "fluent English speakers have formed a unique community in Russia" and "have a strong adherence to international corporate values."

It's not clear if that community is the "third column" Vladimir Putin has threatened to wipe from the face of the Earth.

He said Russians can distinguish between "true patriots from the scum and the traitors."

It might be wise for Vitter's fluent English speakers, who are bullish on global corporate values, to lay low as the isolated and paranoid Putin threatens to fill the jails with those who adhere to western ideals. —Kevin McCauley